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THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS

MARVEL COMICS No.253 £1.20
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Stories · Games · Colouring

Hello, everybody!

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Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to

.....

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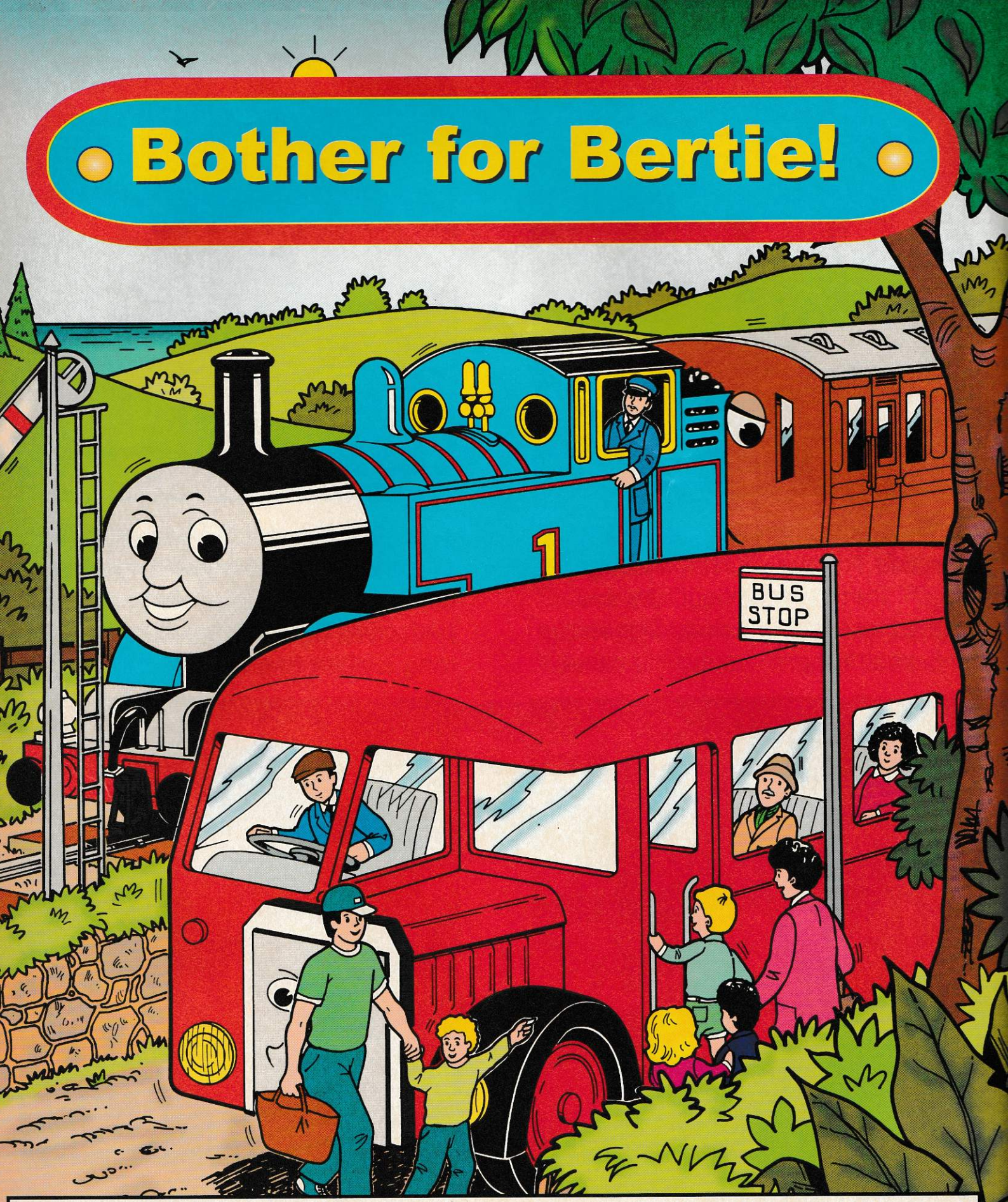
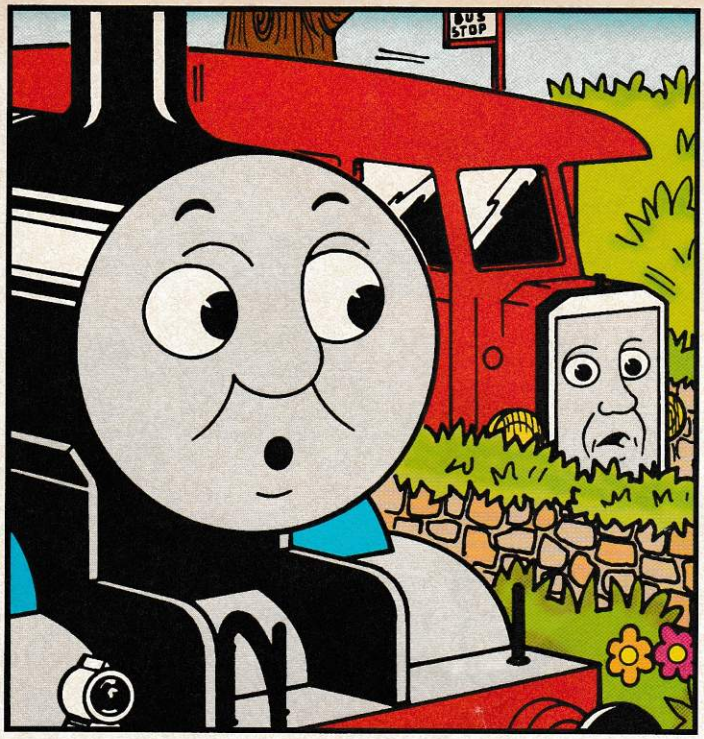
Bother for Bertie!

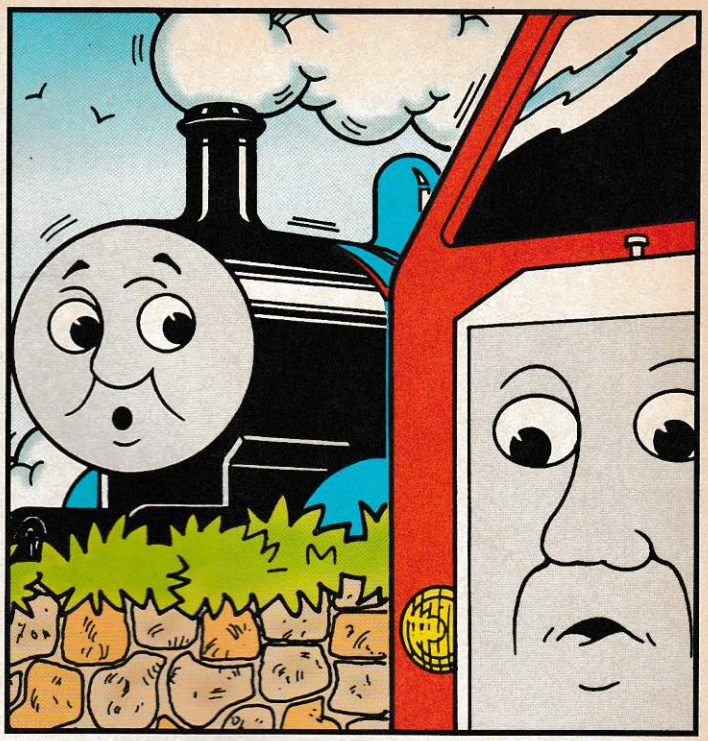


1. The sky was blue and the sun shone down on the Island of Sodor. Thomas felt bright and cheerful as he steamed busily along his branch line with Annie and Clarabel.

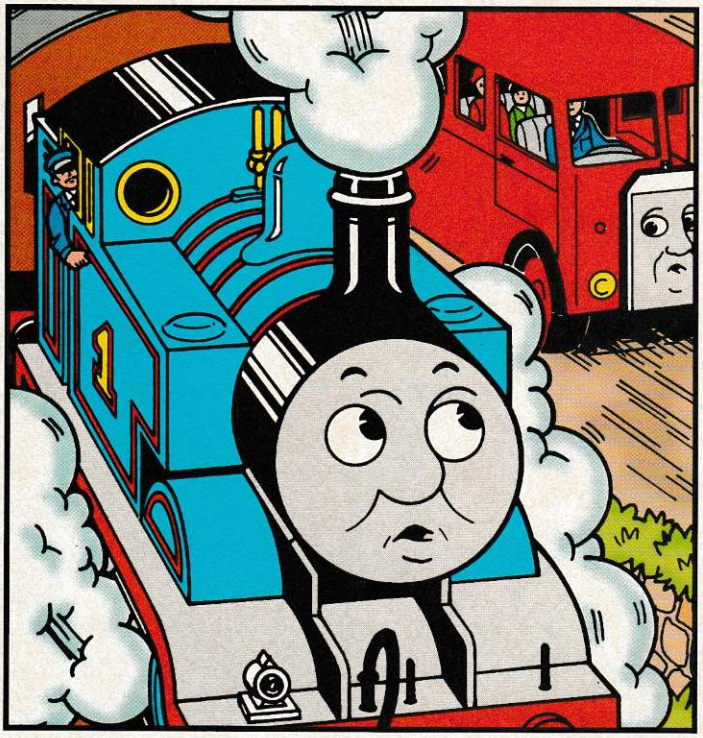
2. As Thomas pulled up at a signal, he spotted Bertie the Bus in a lane nearby. Bertie was waiting at a bus stop while some passengers stepped on board.



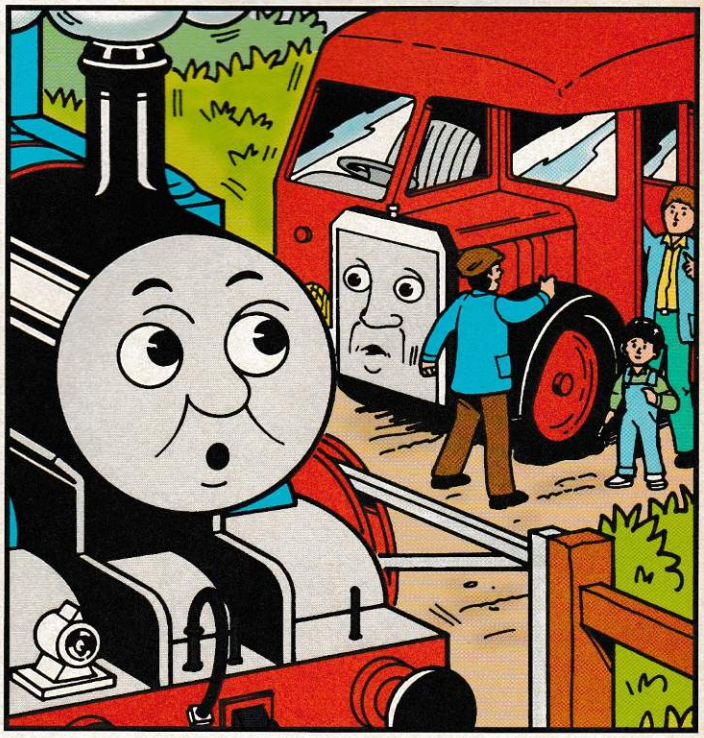
3. "Peep! Peep! Hello, Bertie!" whistled Thomas. "Isn't it a lovely day?" "It's a horrible day!" the bus replied, gloomily. Thomas was really shocked. "What's wrong?" he asked.



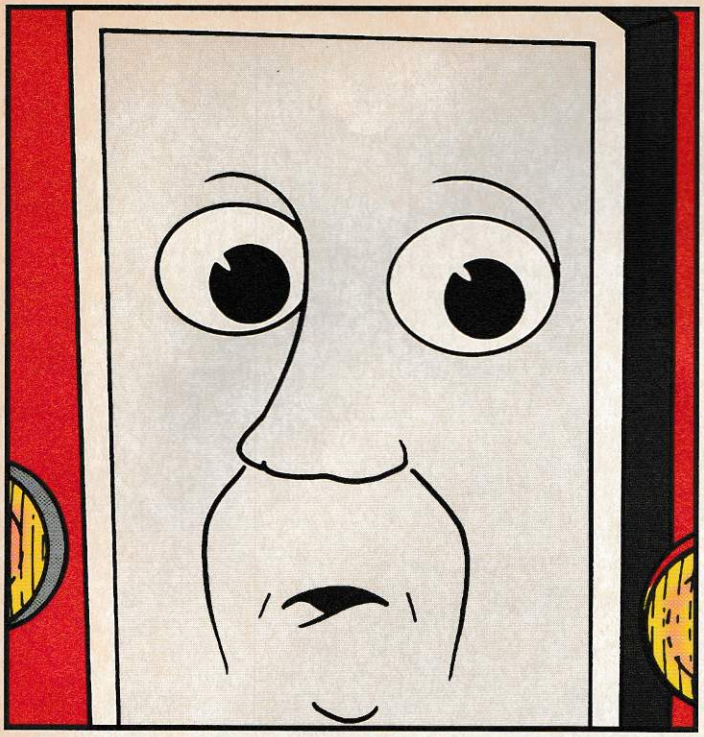
4. Before Bertie could explain, the signal changed to show Thomas the line ahead was clear. He had to get underway again. Then Bertie's bell rang for him to drive on too.



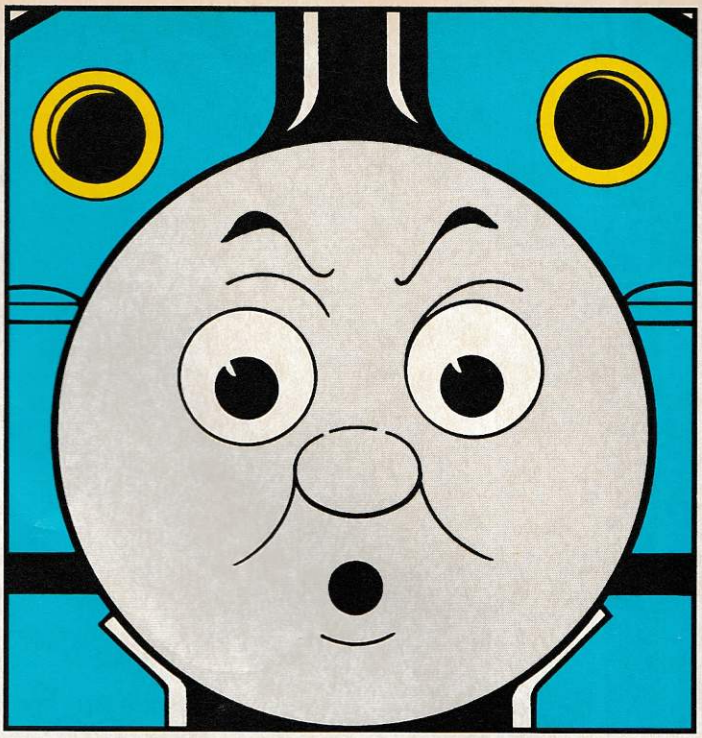
5. "I'll race you to the level-crossing!" cried Thomas. "I can't!" called Bertie. "I'm getting too old to go fast any more!" Thomas was puzzled as he left Bertie behind.



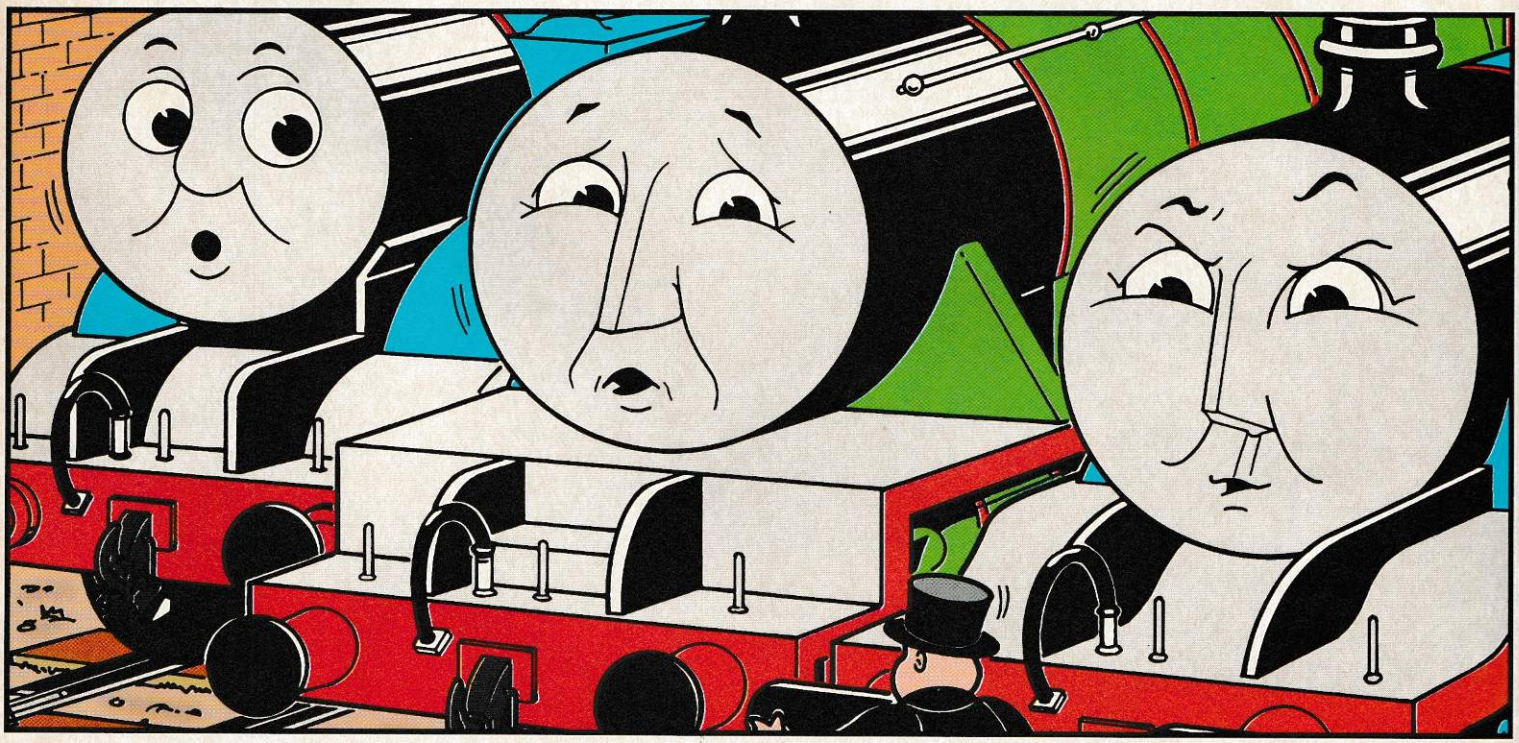
6. Later, Thomas met Bertie again. Now the bus had a puncture. Bertie looked sadder than ever. "Cheer up! It'll soon be mended!" said Thomas. "Pah!" sulked Bertie. "Who cares!"



7. "Today I heard that another bus from the mainland is to be used on part of my route, by the seaside," he told Thomas, at last. "I expect I'll be scrapped altogether soon!"



8. "Not if I've anything to do with it!" thought Thomas. Back at the Main Station yard, he told the other engines. "Bertie's a Really Useful Bus. We must help him!" they agreed.



9. Next moment, the Fat Controller arrived. Being the biggest and most important engine, Gordon told him about Bertie. "Yes, a special bus is coming," replied the Fat Controller.

10. "It's to be serviced at the Works!" he added. The engines huffed and puffed unhappily. Then the Fat Controller asked Thomas to collect the bus from the Big Harbour.

11. Before setting off, Thomas was coupled to a flat truck. At the Big Harbour, a crane lifted the bus on to it from the deck of a ship. It was the strangest bus Thomas had ever seen.

12. The other engines thought so, too. That bus is much older than Bertie!" gasped Thomas. "It can only go out in fine weather," the Fat Controller told his engines.

13. When they heard why, they all cheered up. So did Bertie. A few days later, he was very happy to carry passengers to the seaside so they could ride on the special bus.

14. "It's an old fashioned bus for the tourists," Bertie told Thomas, who stood nearby. "You weren't too old for that job, Bertie," laughed Thomas. "You were too new!"

PEEP! PEEP! THE END!

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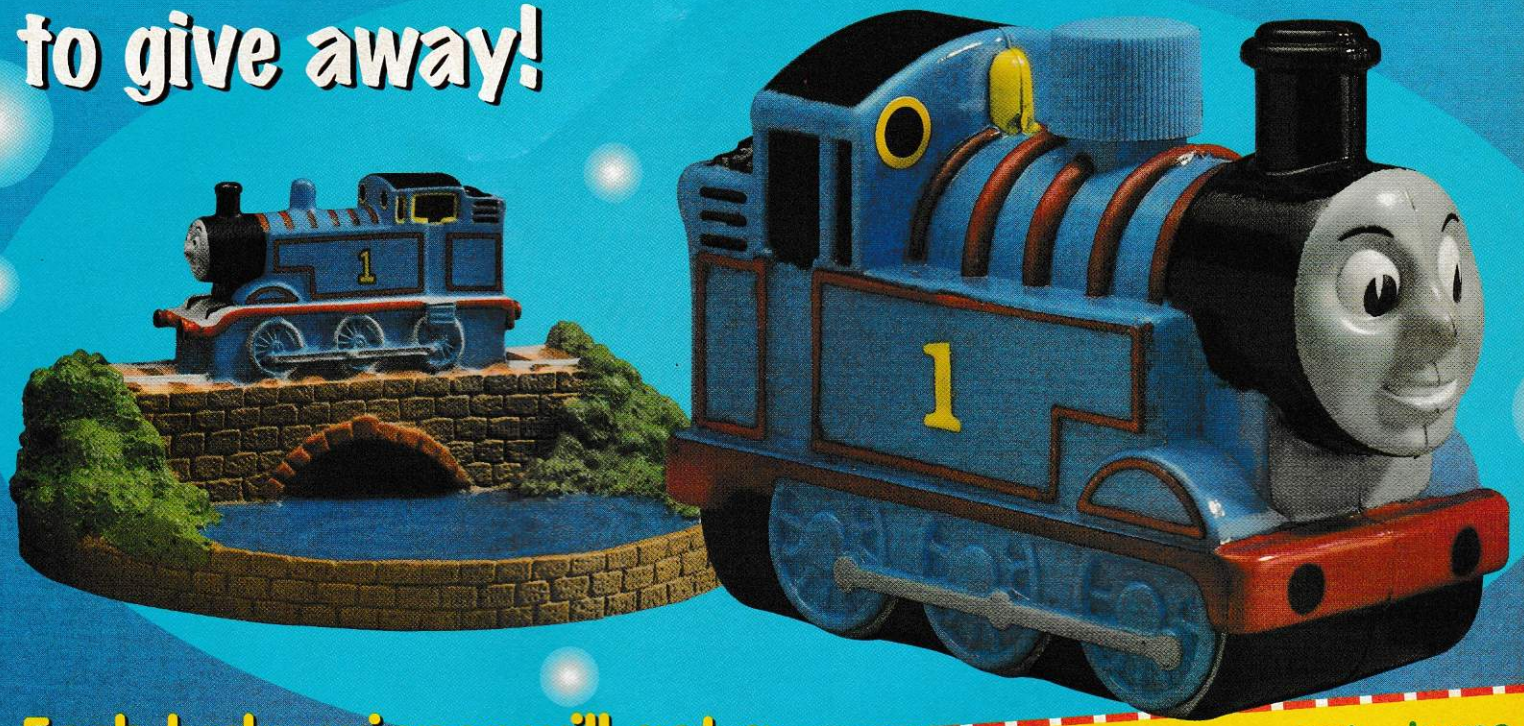

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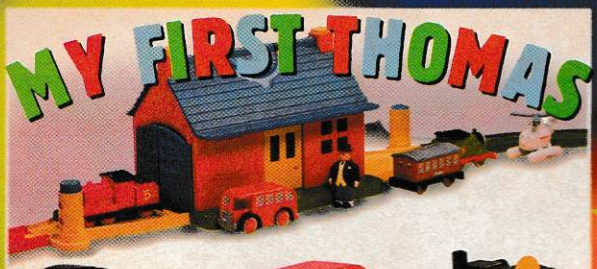
MY FIRST THOMAS



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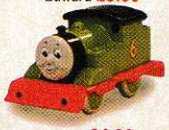
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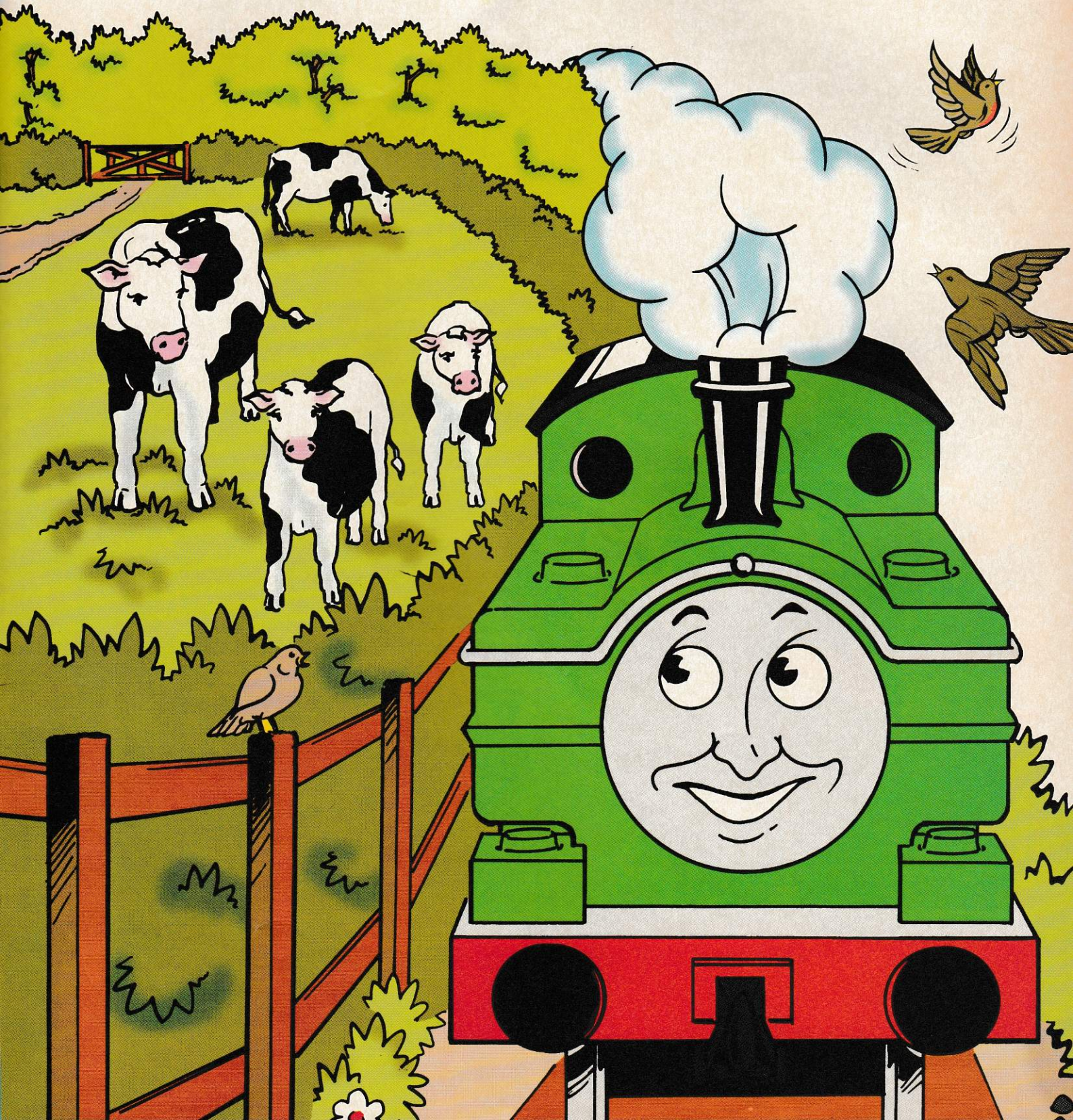
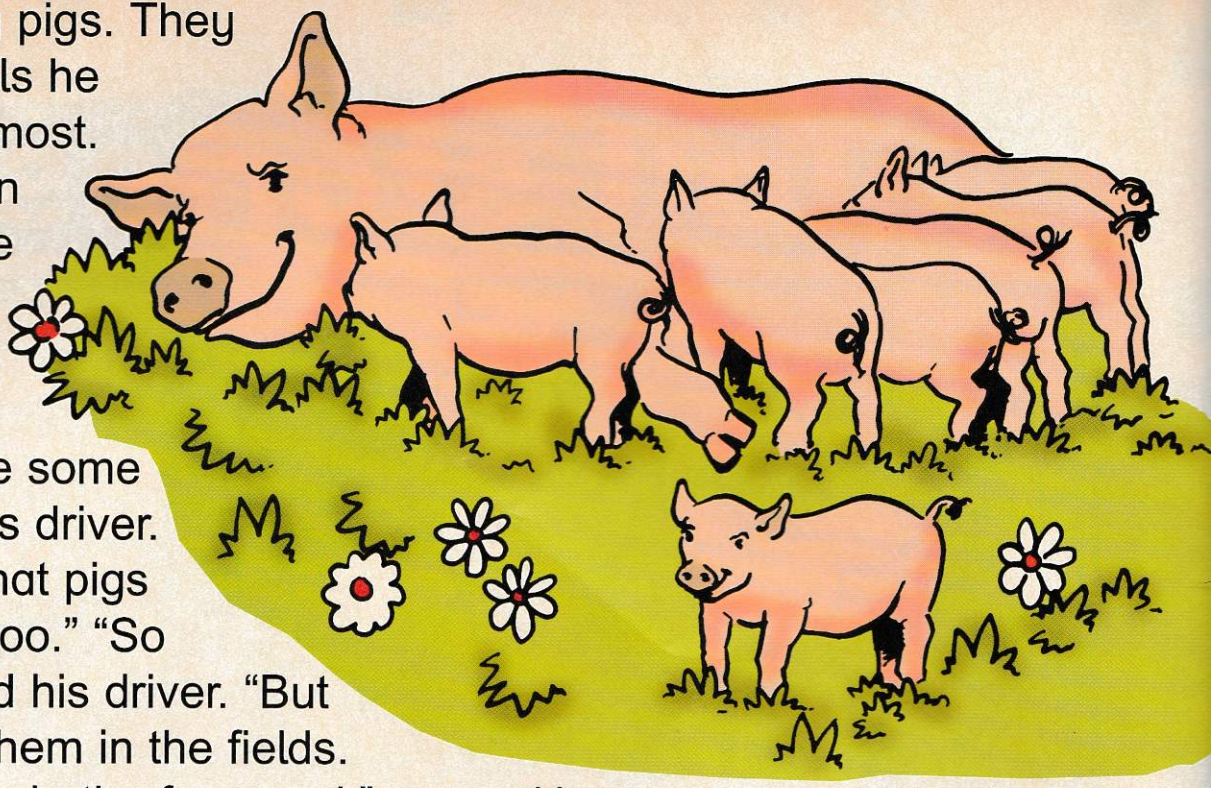
Duck's Special Trip!

Duck often passed a farm as he puffed along the track and he loved to look at the animals in the fields. "Peep, peep," he'd whistle. Duck often saw sheep, cows and horses but he had



never seen any pigs. They were the animals he wanted to see most. He'd never seen one but Terence the Tractor had told him all about them. "I wish I could see some pigs," he told his driver. "Terence said that pigs lived on farms too." "So they do," replied his driver. "But you won't see them in the fields. Pigs usually live in the farmyard."



Duck was disappointed to hear this. Trains weren't allowed in the farmyard so it looked like he'd never see a pig.

A few days later, Duck saw the Fat Controller talking to his driver. They were both whispering together and looking over at Duck. "What's going on?" wondered Duck, a little worried. "I hope I haven't done anything wrong." At last his driver came over to him. "We've got a special job for you today," he smiled, as he coupled a truck to the little engine. Duck was excited. "What is it?" he asked. "You'll have to wait and see," his driver replied. "Now come on Duck, we don't want to be late."

As he puffed along, Duck tried to guess where he was going.

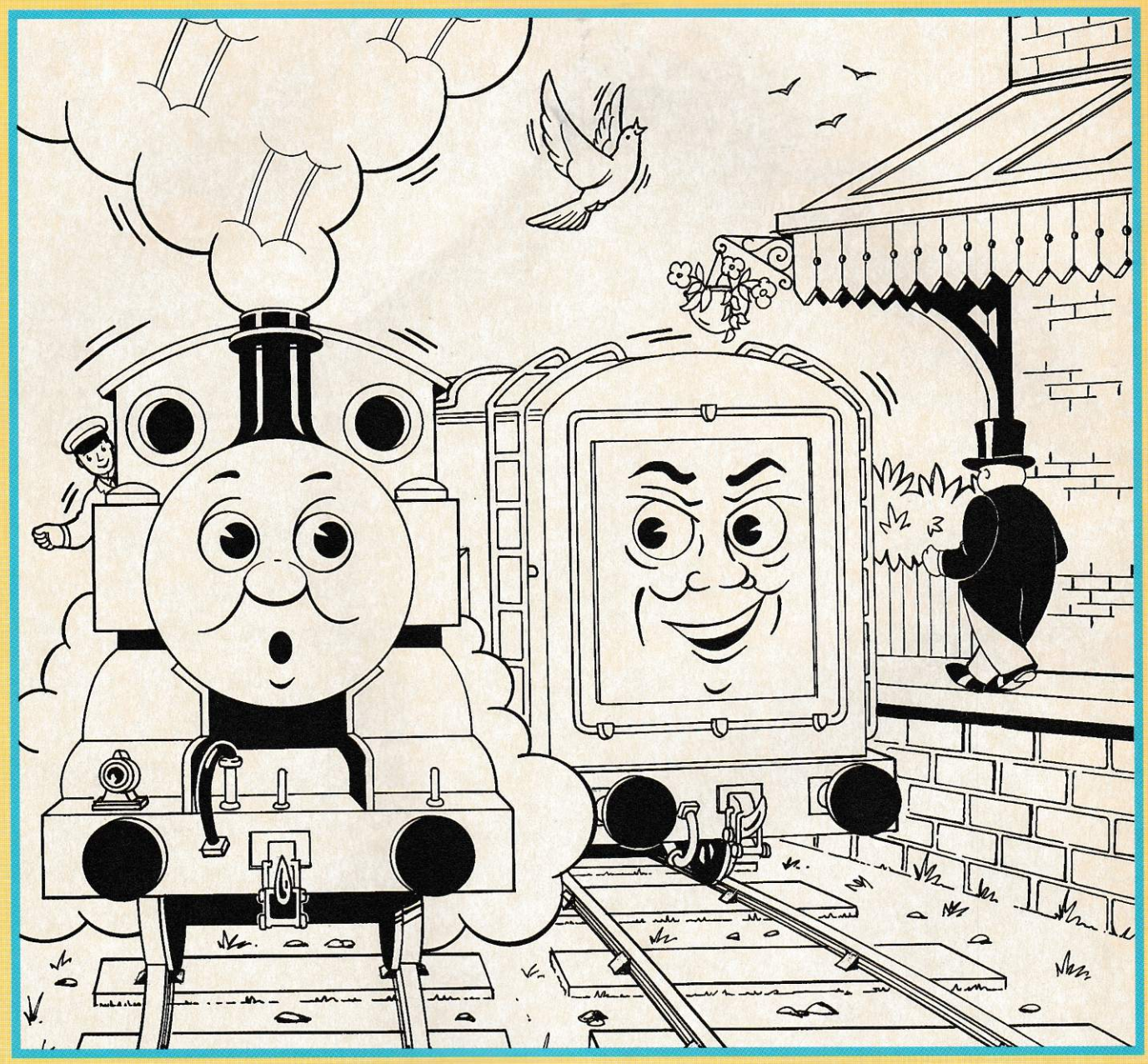
He was very surprised when they stopped outside a farm. And even more surprised when a farmer brought out some cute pink animals with tiny curly tails! They sounded just like the pigs Terence had told him about. "They're pigs, aren't they?" he gasped. "They certainly are," nodded his driver. "The farmer has sold this mother pig and her piglets to another farmer and he wants us to deliver them to him."

The farmer led the mother pig and her babies into the truck. The little piglets squealed, noisily, but Duck didn't mind a bit. This was the best cargo he had ever helped to carry.

Duck set off happily to take them to their new home. He couldn't wait to tell the other engines about his special delivery!

A read & colour story

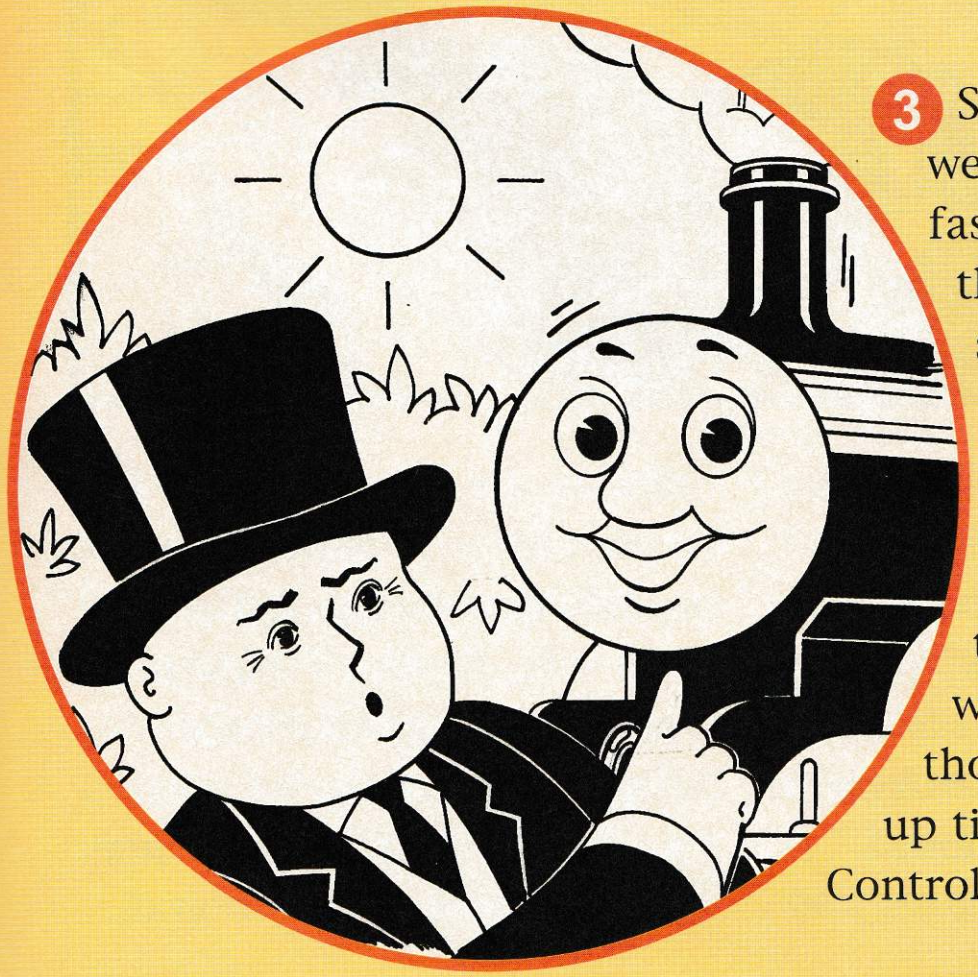
Tall stories!



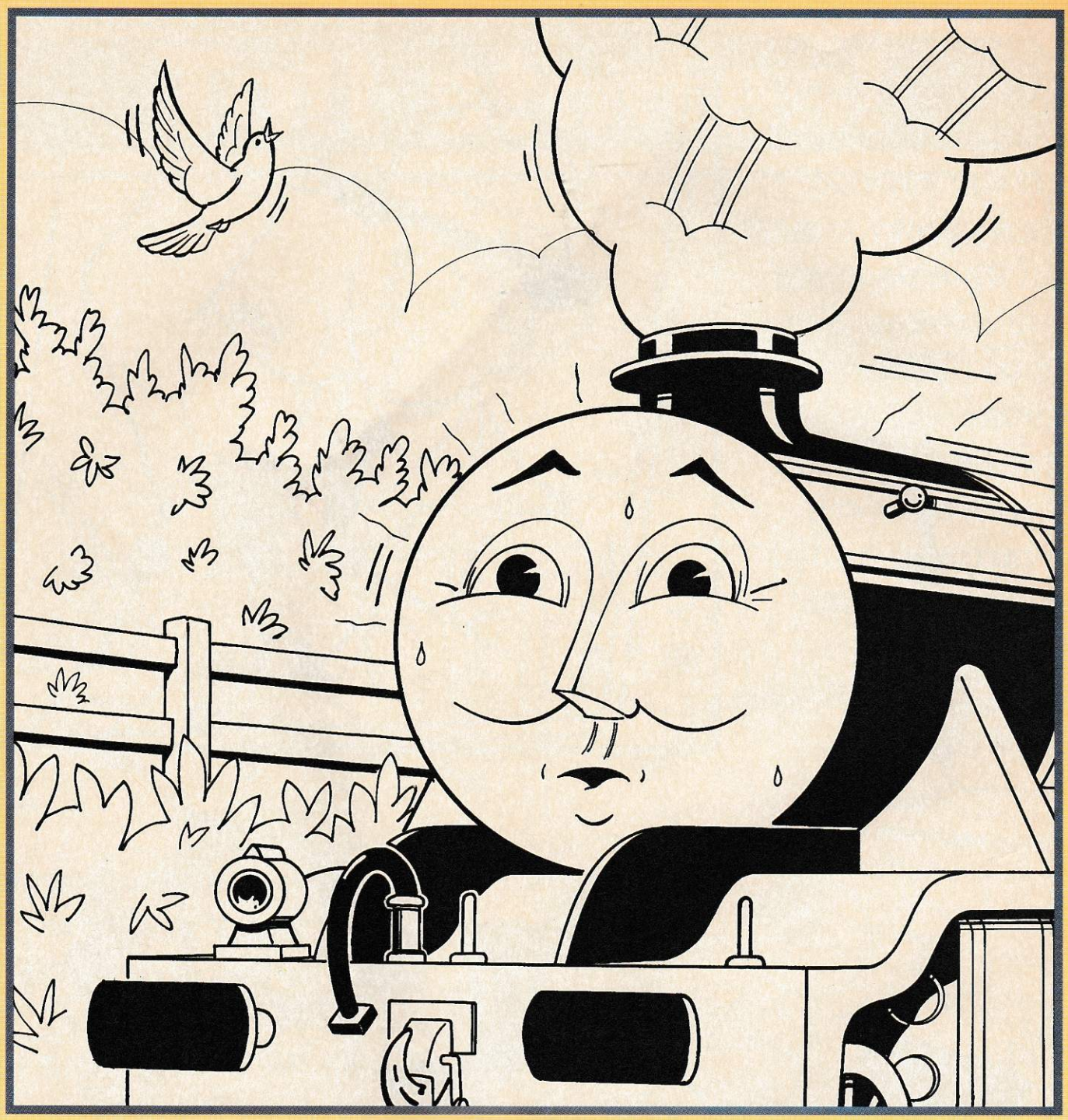
1 The Fat Controller was extremely cross with Thomas. He was half an hour late with the afternoon train from Knapford! "I'm sorry Sir," said the little engine. "It was such a nice, sunny, cheery day, it seemed a shame to hurry."

The Fat Controller was not pleased! "You must remember to be on time!" he said, sternly. After he had left, oily Diesel sniggered. "You are silly," he said. "You should make up an excuse. Blame it on signals or cows. Use your imagination!"

2 The next day, Thomas was not too *slow*, he was too *fast*! Bertie the Bus had made a cheeky remark about Thomas being an old slowcoach, so Thomas decided to teach Bertie a lesson by racing him all the way to Wellsworth. The carriages jostled and jumped about behind Thomas, shaking the passengers up and down!



3 Some of his passengers were angry with how fast he had gone! When the Fat Controller spoke to him about it, cheeky Thomas remembered Diesel's advice and made up a story. "The clock tower at Knapford was fast," he said. "I thought I had to make up time!" The Fat Controller shook his head.



4 Thomas was pleased with his excuses and he decided that making things up was fun. Whenever he was late, he always had a story ready. "Cows on the line! A broken signal! High winds! Piles of leaves!" His list of excuses was endless. One day, he told Gordon he was late because a big tree had fallen on the main line. "Bother!" huffed Gordon. He believed Thomas' story, and went the long way round to avoid the imaginary tree. He was very late home!

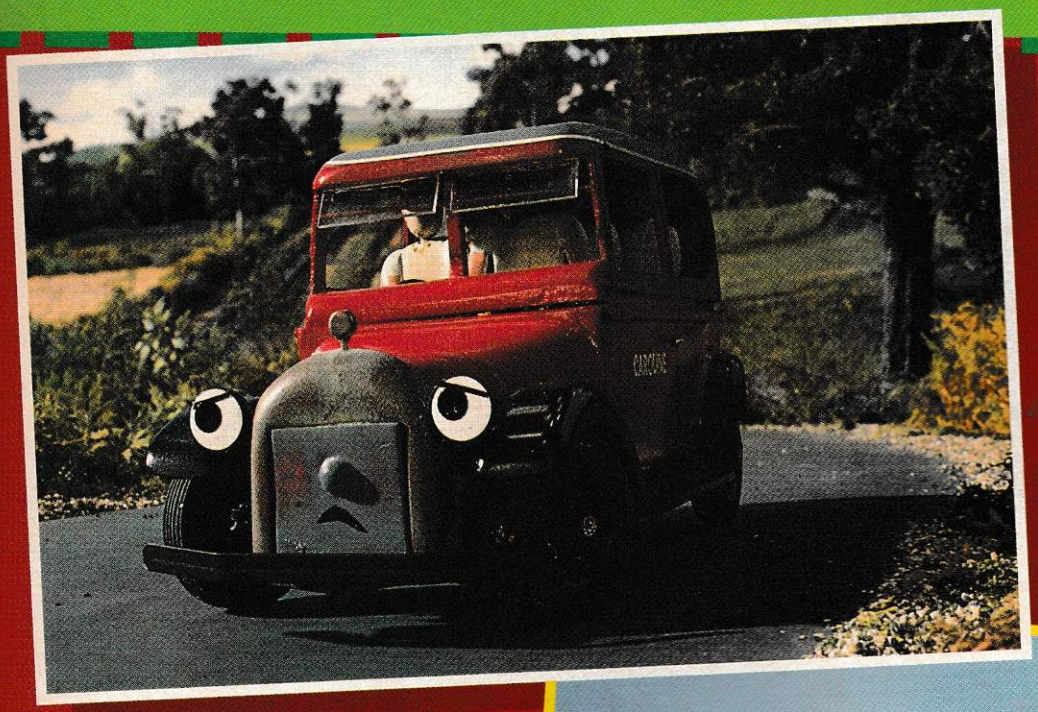
5 When Gordon explained about Thomas' tree, the Fat Controller was furious! "There isn't any tree on the line!" he spluttered. "You're as bad as Diesel!" he told Thomas, and gave both of them a good telling off. "I don't care how late my engines are," said the Fat Controller, "as long as they always tell me the truth." Back in the shed both the engines promised they would never make up stories again. "That is," smirked Diesel, "unless I've got a really good excuse!"

The end

All about

Caroline is a gentle and delicate two-door saloon car!

Caroline!



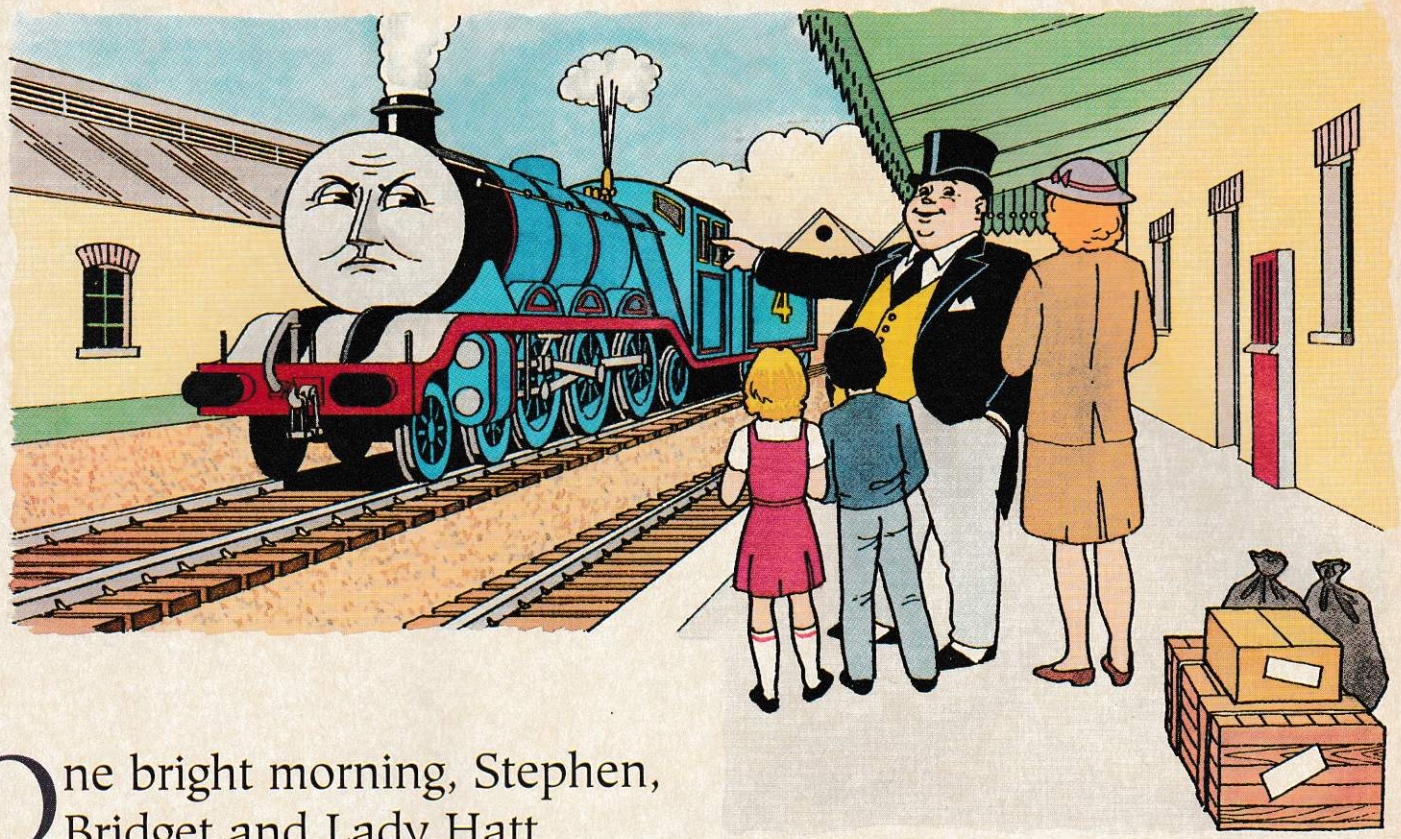
She loves the occasional picnic, prefering to take life easy. She doesn't like to be hurried!

Caroline loves getting a lift from one of the engines! It means she can sit back and enjoy the view!

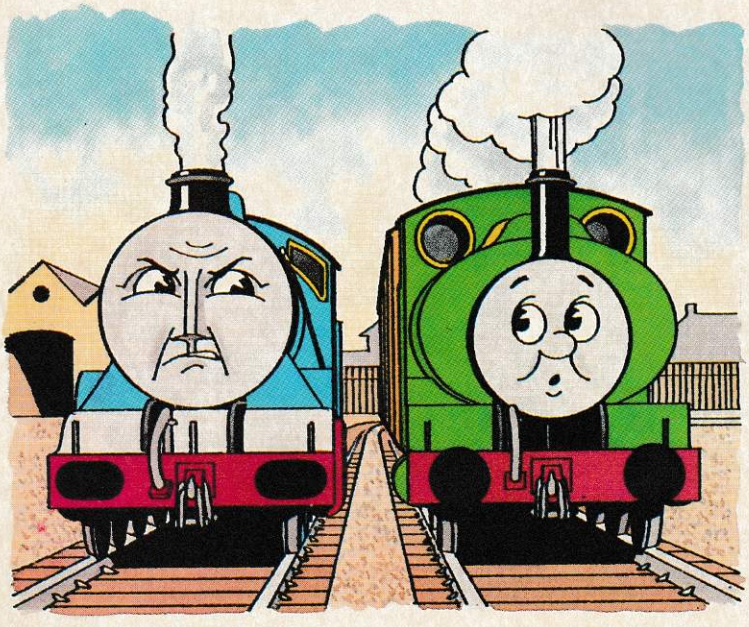
Win a model of Caroline!

Five lucky winners will win a splendid model of Caroline from the ERTL engine range! Just send a postcard, with your name, age and address to: Thomas/253 model competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ. Closing date: July 3rd, 1997.

‘Coaches!’

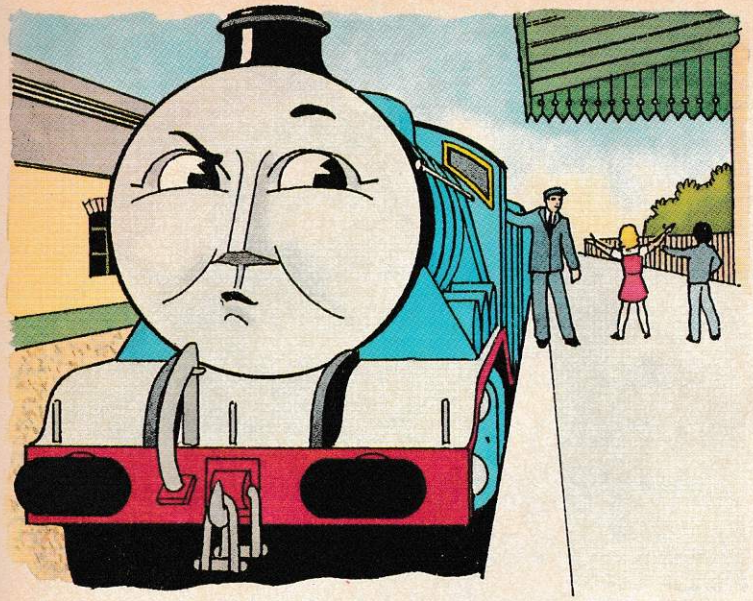


One bright morning, Stephen, Bridget and Lady Hatt arrived at the Main Station. They were going to visit a special show. The children were very excited and could hardly wait. “Gordon will take you in the Express,” the Fat Controller said. “Percy is just fetching the coaches for him.”



While they waited on the platform, Stephen and Bridget spotted Gordon standing grandly in the yard. Percy came shunting slowly towards him with the Express coaches. “Hurry up, Percy,” called Gordon, impatiently. “I haven’t got all day, you know!” “All right! All right! I’m doing my best,” replied Percy. “Pulling these coaches is heavy work for a little engine, like me,” he puffed. “That’s why the Fat Controller has given *me* the Really Useful task of taking the Express,” said Gordon importantly. “I’m the biggest and strongest engine in the yard.”

Soon Gordon was ready to

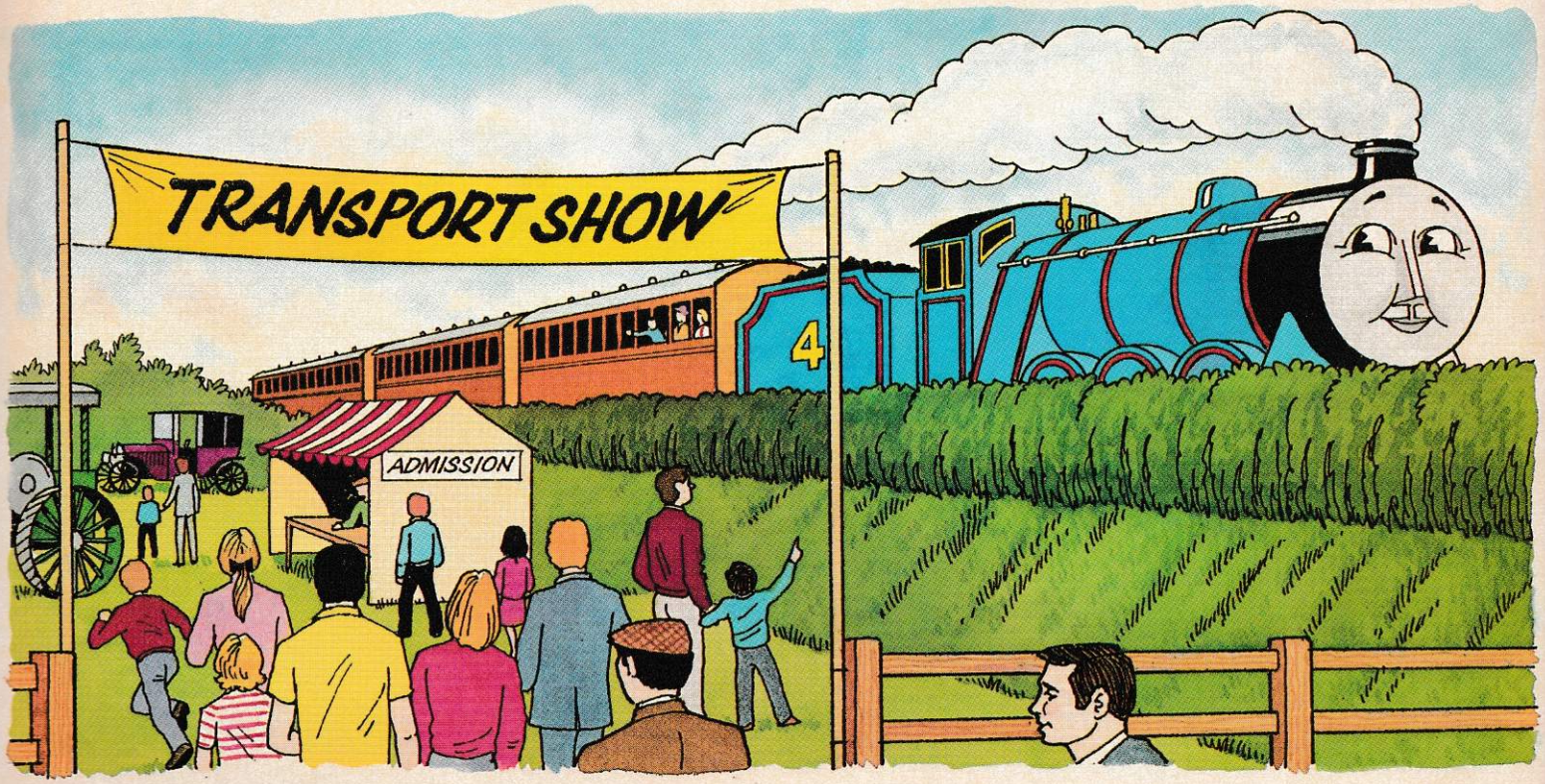


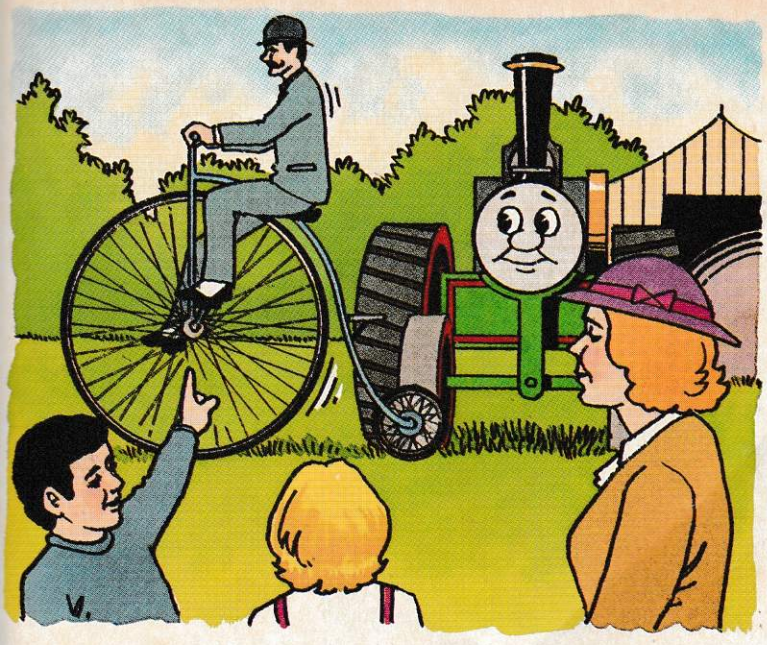
leave. He rolled into the platform to collect his passengers. "We really enjoy riding aboard Gordon's Express," Stephen told the engine driver. "We're going to ride on another coach as well, today. It's pulled by horses," added Bridget.

Gordon overheard them and wasn't impressed. "Pah! Nonsense!" he thought. "Horses aren't strong enough to pull coaches. Why, I'd like to see any horse that could take the Express!"

But the children didn't have time to explain. The guard blew his whistle for everyone to board the train. Lady Hatt and the children stepped into one of the Express Coaches. Then Gordon steamed on his way.

Clackety-clack! Clackety-clack! The coaches were soon whizzing over the rails as Gordon raced along. Lady Hatt and the children stayed on board until Gordon approached the very last station on his route. There was a large field nearby. A big banner read: 'Transport Show'. Lots of excited people were arriving. There were all



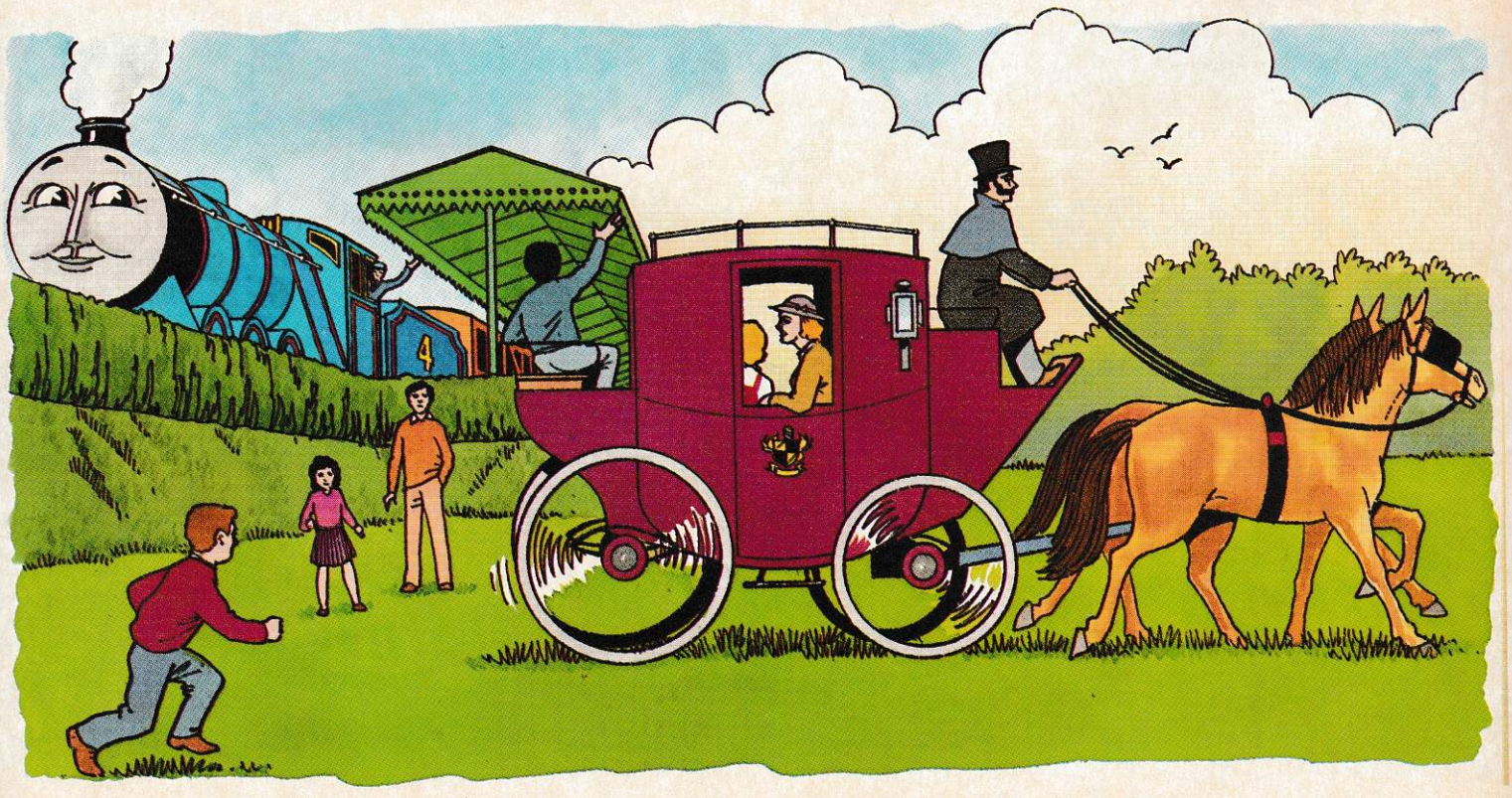


sorts of very old cars and bicycles. One bicycle had a huge front wheel and a tiny back one! Even Trevor the Traction Engine was there for people to look at and admire. Lady Hatt and her grandchildren hurried to the show so that they wouldn't miss anything. Meanwhile, Gordon had to wait at the station. He had gone so fast that he was ahead of schedule.

Moments later, Gordon was surprised to see Stephen and Bridget riding across the field inside an old-fashioned stagecoach, pulled by a team of horses. The children waved cheerfully to Gordon and his driver from the window as the coach went past.

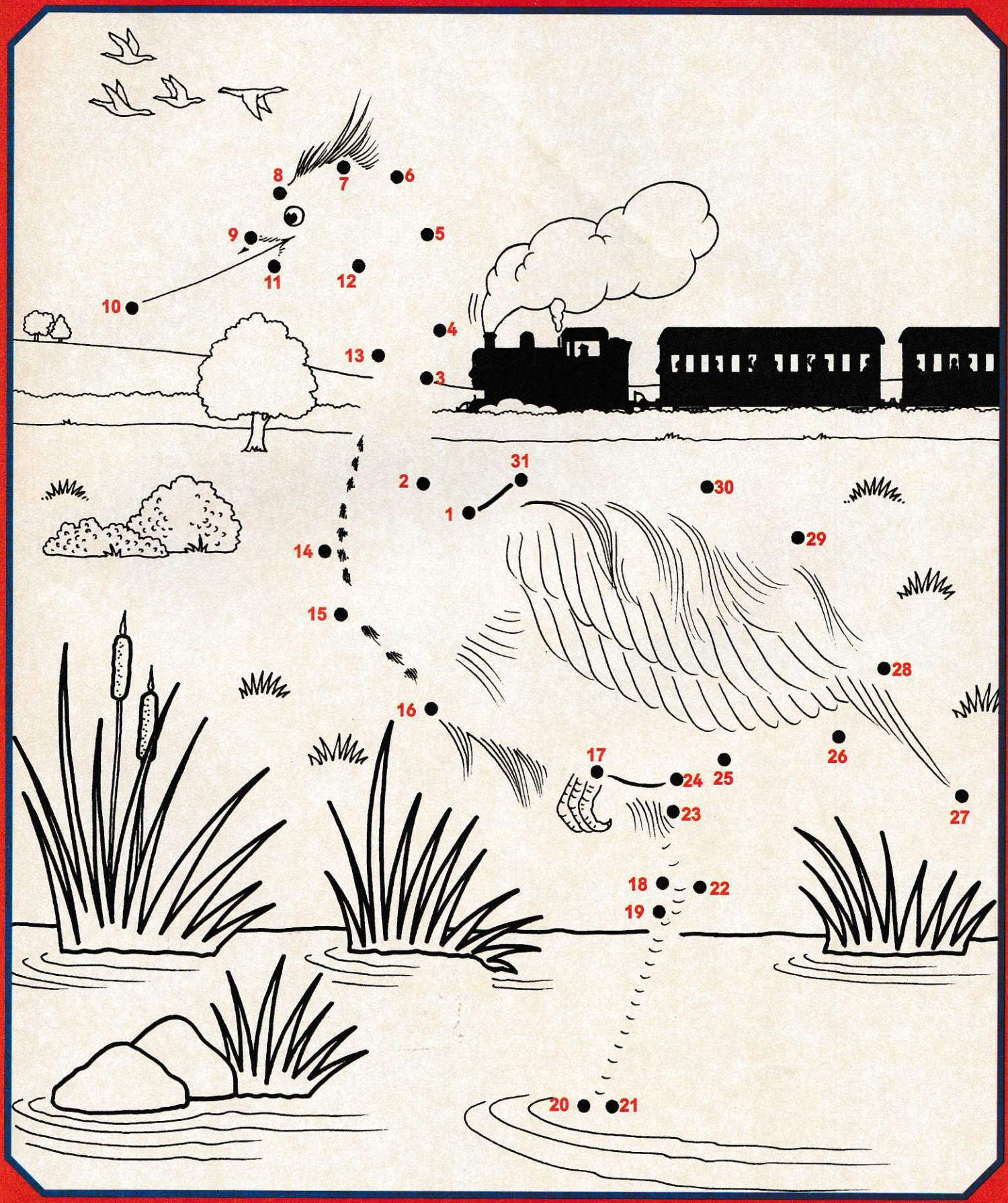
"So that's what Stephen and Bridget meant!" laughed the driver. "People travelled in horse-drawn stagecoaches before cars, buses and trains were invented." Gordon listened carefully as the driver explained. "They didn't mean a railway coach at all!" smiled Gordon. Secretly, he was quite glad!

The End



Dot to dot!

What kind of bird can you spot? Just finish off this dot to dot!



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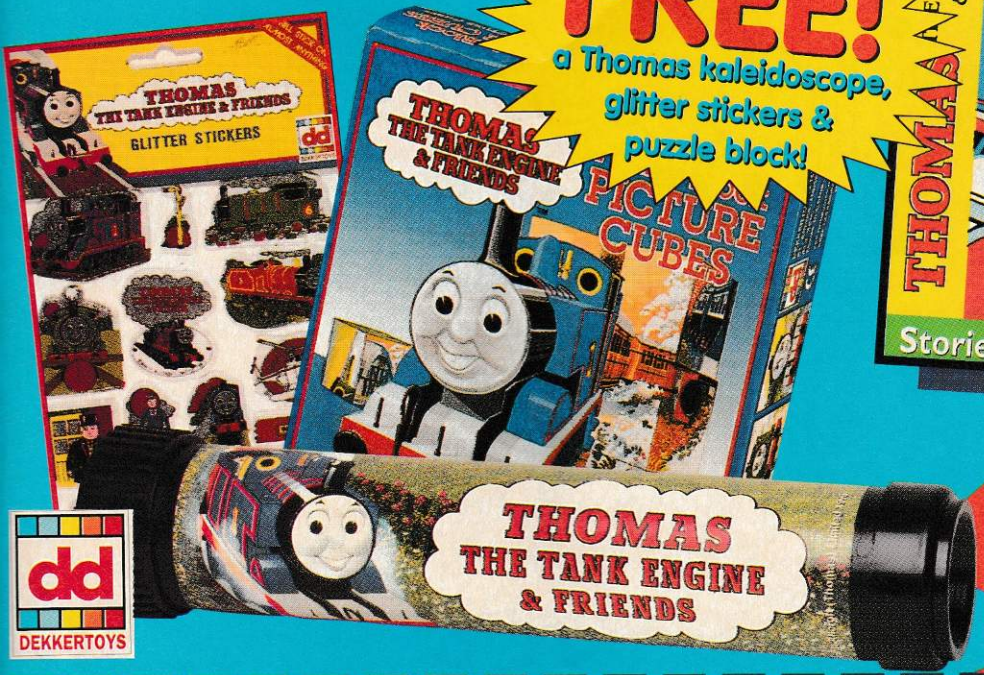

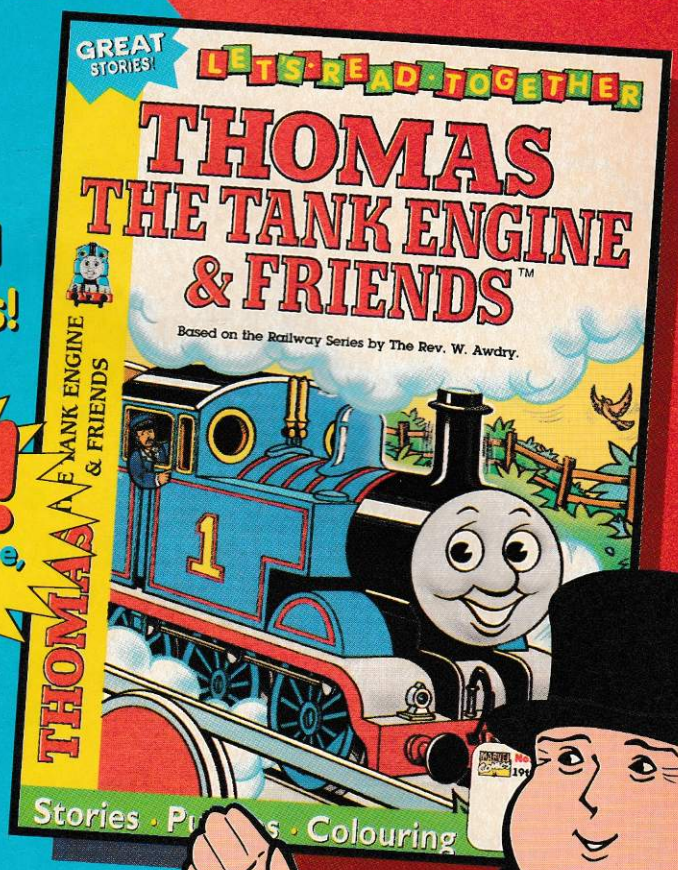

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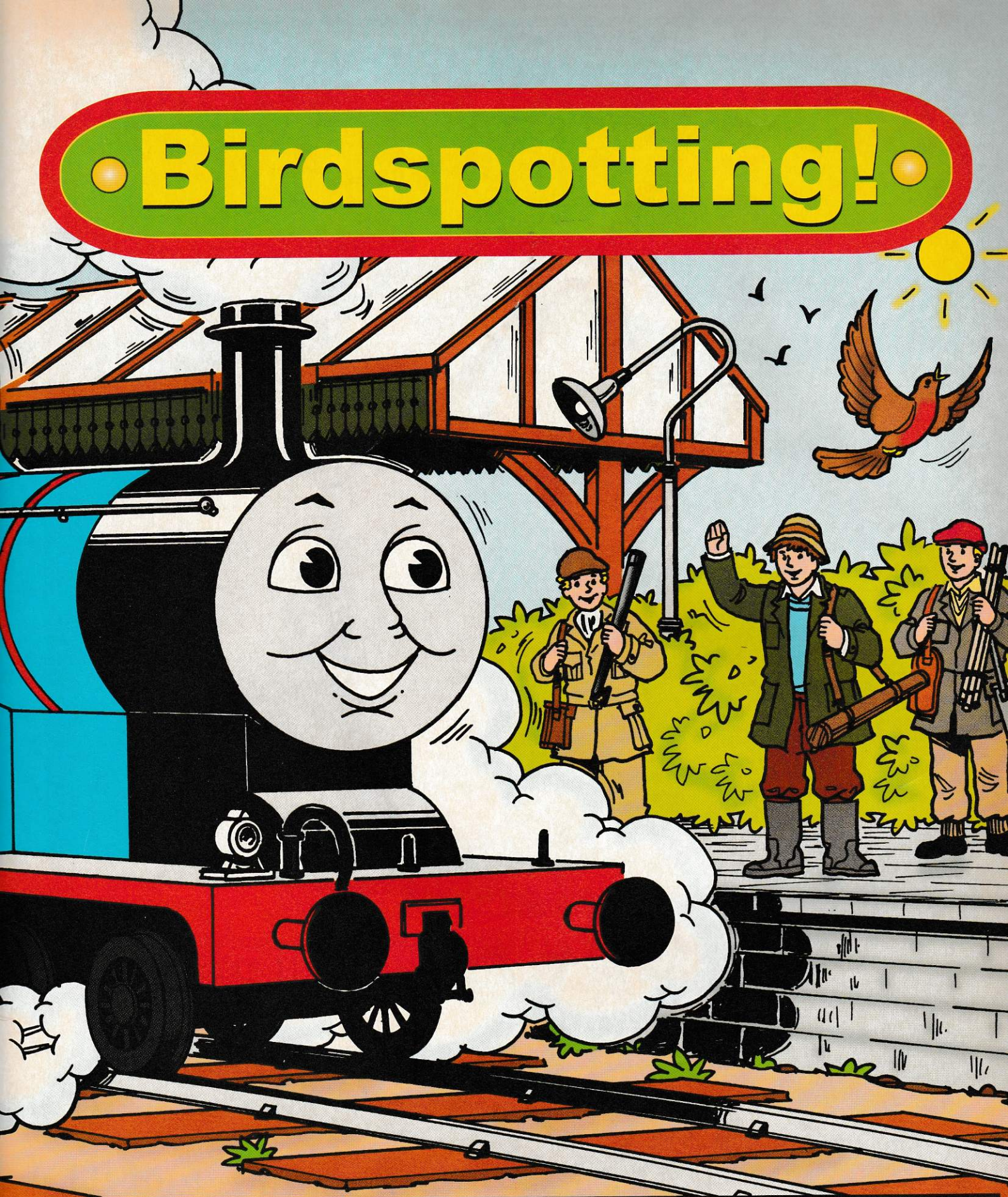
Birdspotting!

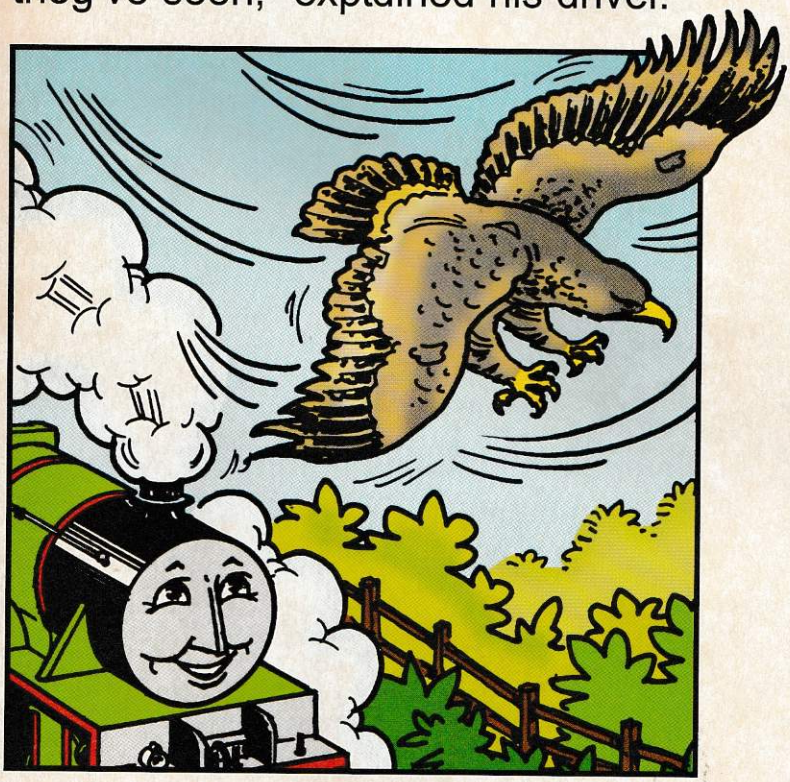


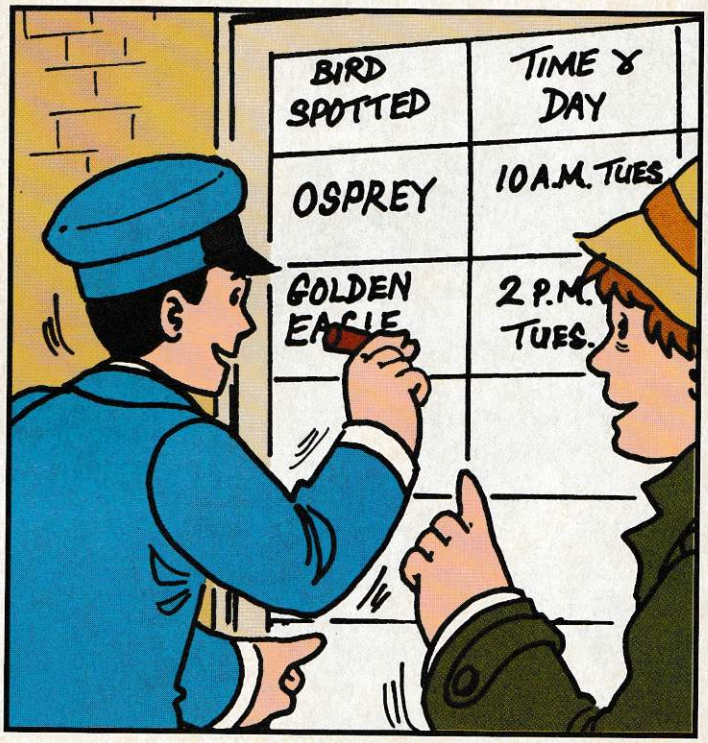
1. One day, an unusual group of holiday-makers arrived at the Main Station. Edward was the first engine to see them and he was very curious. "Who are they?" he wondered.

2. The holiday-makers had lots of strange luggage with them. They all carried cameras, tripods and long telescopes. Edward was puzzled. "They're birdspotters!" said the driver.

3. As Edward pulled away, he saw a large blackboard on the platform. "What's that for?" he whistled. "The birdspotters write down what birds they've seen," explained his driver.

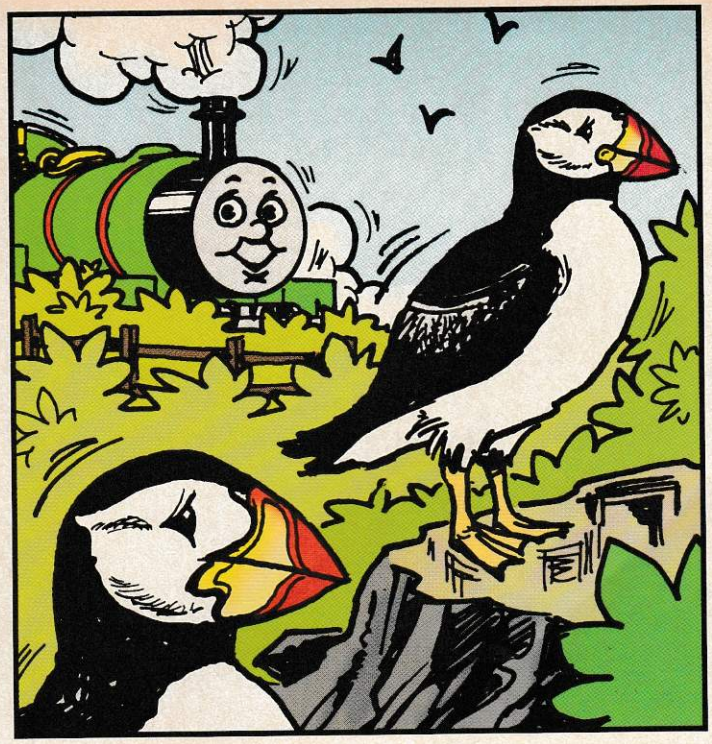
4. "What a good idea for a holiday!" said Edward. "And using the railway is the best way to explore the island and discover the birdlife!" said his driver. "Exactly!" peeped Edward.





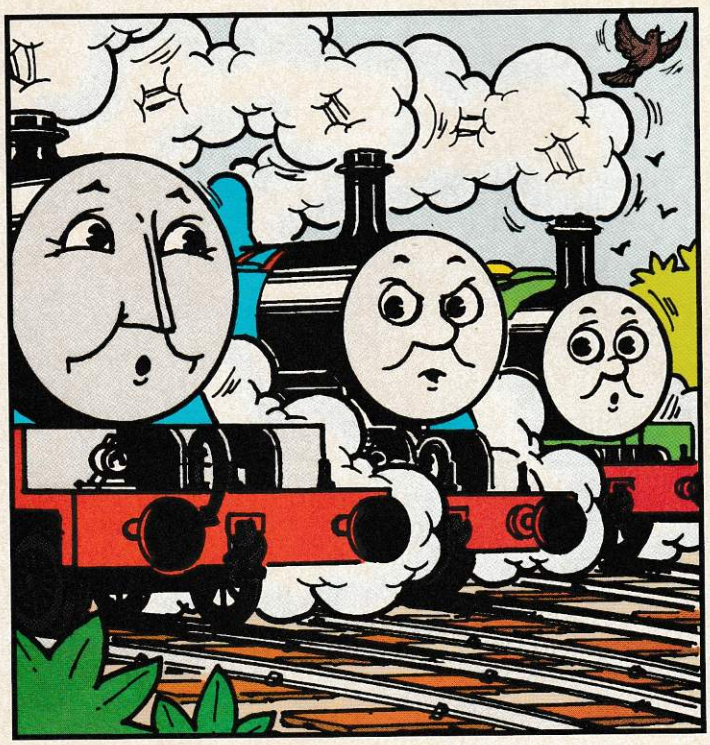
5. The other engines soon heard about the birdspotting and decided to join in. Henry saw a big bird hovering above a river. "That's a Golden Eagle!" exclaimed his driver.

6. Henry was very pleased with himself. "Well done, Henry!" called his driver. "I'll make sure everyone knows!" He chalked up the good news on the special blackboard.



7. Percy was also enjoying a day's birdspotting! Out along Thomas' line, he saw some puffins on a cliff. "Ha, ha, what funny faces!" he peeped. "They're puffins!" laughed his driver.

8. "And they probably think you've got a funny face as well, Percy, but they're too polite to laugh!" he added. Then he chalked up Percy's find on the blackboard back at the station.



9. That evening, back at the yard, poor Thomas was fed-up. "It's alright for you lot, out birdspotting!" he huffed, "while I had to stay here and shunt Troublesome Trucks!"

10. Next day, Thomas got his chance when lots of birdspotters boarded Annie! He set off and saw some pigeons on a roof. "PEEEP!" he whistled, and scared them away.

11. “Shush, Thomas! You must be as quiet as you can,” said his driver. “We don’t want to scare the birds away!” Thomas understood, and puffed along gently, doing his best to be good. Further along the line he reached a big lake, with all sorts of birds looking for food. This time, Thomas rolled quietly by, so the birdspotters had a wonderful view and they could take photos.

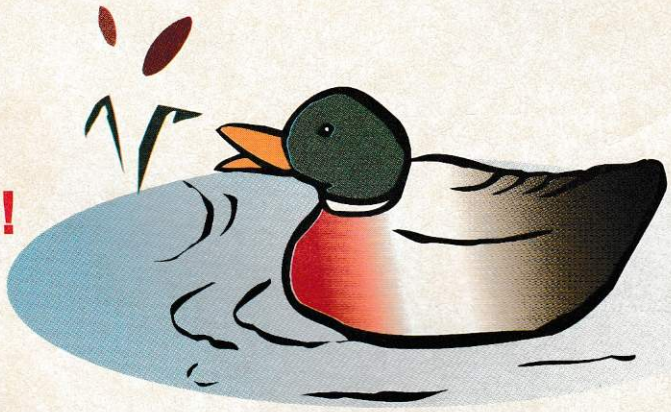
12. They were very pleased with Thomas because they were lucky enough to see a beautiful swan! That evening, Thomas boasted about his birdspotting skills. “You see, there’s a secret to being a good birdspotter!” he said, proudly. “It’s all about being very, very quiet!” All the engines laughed. “That doesn’t sound like you at all, Thomas!” they whistled.

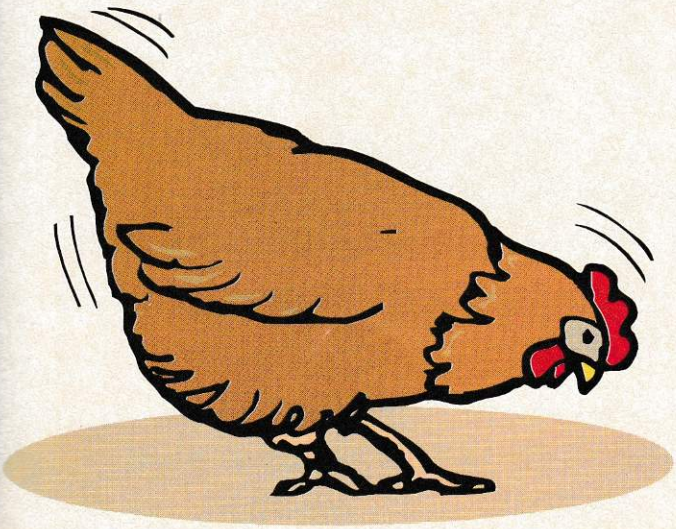
Sing-along

**Daisy loves birds! She's made up some s
why don't you help her complete them**

This bird is colourful and bright,
His name rhymes with carrot!
He often cries 'pieces of eight',
It must be a . . . . . !

You'll find him on a pond,
His name sounds like luck!
Quack! Quack! Quack!
It must be a . . . . !





This bird lays a lot of eggs,
Her name rhymes with pen!
Often found eating grain,
It must be a . . . !

with Daisy!

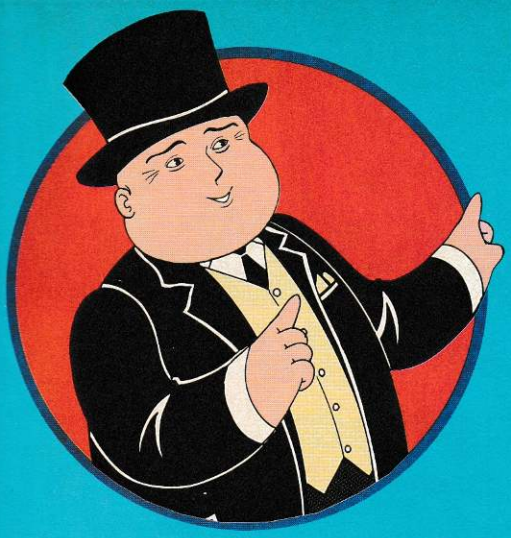
songs about them. Using the picture clues,
? Daisy has the answers at the bottom!

This is a very wise bird,
His name sounds like **towel!**
Being a creature of the night,
It must be an . . . !

This bird has a pretty red breast,
His name rhymes with **bobbin!**
We see him at Christmas time,
It must be a . . . . . !

Why don't you make up a song about a bird that you like?

Answers: Parrot - Duck - Hen - Owl - Robin



The m

Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Train, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

Star Letter

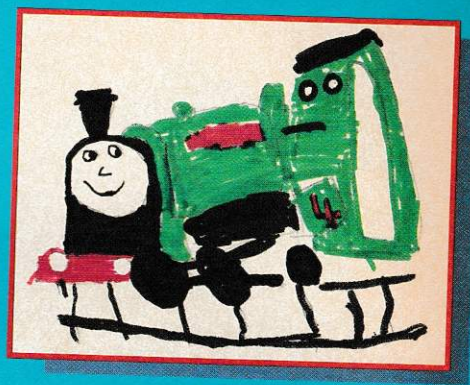
Dear Fat Controller,
Would Thomas like to work somewhere other than Sodor?

From Antony Menhenitt, aged 4.

Thomas loves working on Sodor! He went to the Mainland once and decided it was far too busy. He much prefers puffing along his own branch line, helping his friends and having lots of fun!

The sender of any letter that is printed as our STAR LETTER will win a splendid Thomas carry case!

Peter Sam's too busy to stop! By Alexander Burnett, aged 5!



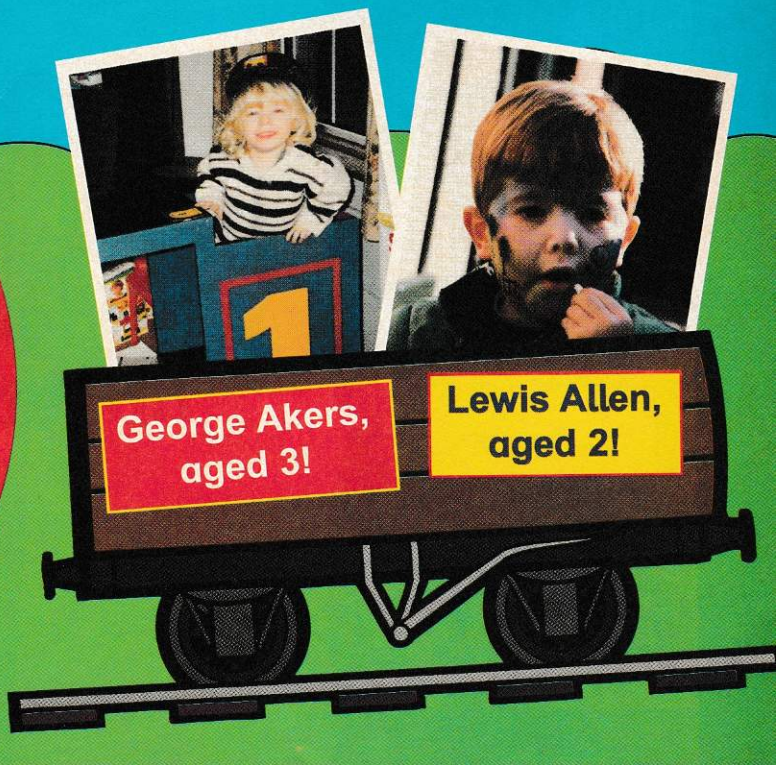
Prize Poem!

I really enjoyed this little poem by Samuel Harris, aged 3.
I hope you do too!

Thomas and all the rest,
They are the very best.
Hardworking to the end,
You couldn't wish for better friends!

Happy Birthday to...

Mitchell Smith, aged 2,
Scott Duthie, aged 3,
Alexander Smith, aged 3,
Callum Rigby, aged 4,
Sam Patrick, aged 4,
Adam Clarke, aged 5
& Daniel Wheatley, aged 6.



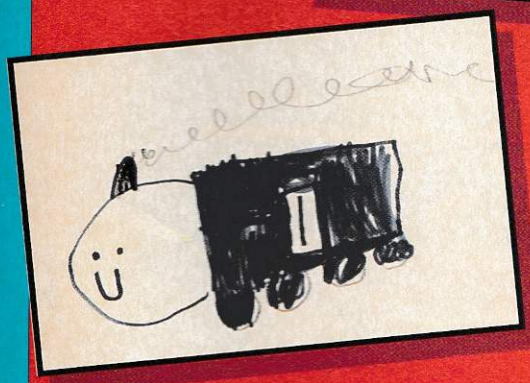
George Akers, aged 3!

Lewis Allen, aged 2!

ail train!

Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a set of special Thomas Glitter Stickers.

Thomas is off on an adventure with Annie by Ewan Craig, aged 6!



Peep! Peep! A very sweet Thomas by David Payne, aged 5!

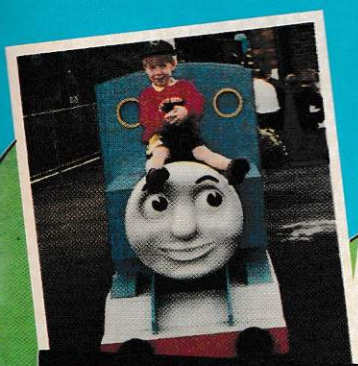
Percy's Jokes

Have you got a favourite joke or funny story? Why not send it to Percy?

What do you give a sick pig?
Oinkment!
Jason Williams, aged 4.

How do you know when there's an elephant under your bed?
Your nose touches the ceiling!
Jonathan Davies, aged 5.

What's bad tempered and goes with custard?
Apple grumble!
Polly Counsell, aged 4.



George Robinson, aged 3!

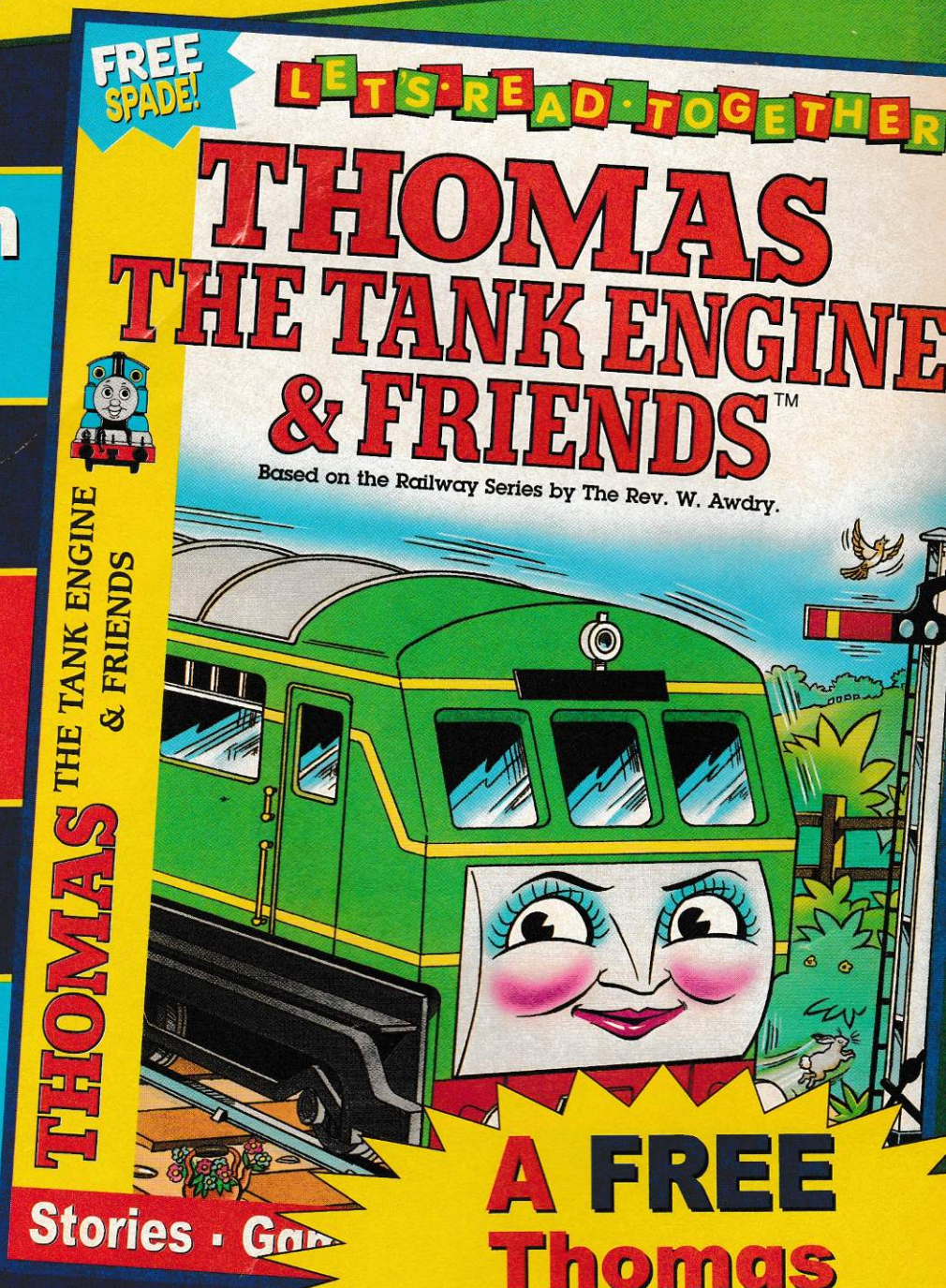
Ross Jackson & Joshua Stubbs!

In the NEXT ISSUE!

Competition fun!

Stories & puzzles!

Reading & colouring!



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